

A DEFINITION AND NAME FOR AN EASTERN CAPE CRINUM

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Crinum macowanii subsp. **confusum** Verdoorn subsp. nov., a typica perianthii tubo lobis brevior, foliis semper glaucissimis paulum angustis undulatis humifusis differt.

Type: Albany, Carlisle Bridge near Grahamstown, *Archibald* 7513 (PRE, holo.).

DESCRIPTION

Bulbs subglobose, about 10 cm. diam., abruptly narrowed into a neck about 8 cm. long. *Leaves* sprawling along the ground, pale green, very glaucous, long, narrow, the median deeply canaliculate, about 40 cm. long, 0.5—5 cm. broad, undulate, margin with a narrow cartilaginous border and ciliate with a few weak distant cartilaginous hairs. *Peduncle* light green and glaucous, sub-compressed, about 40 cm. long, 2 cm. wide, 1.3 cm. thick. *Umbel* about 14—25 flowered. *Spathe-valves*, 2 outer green becoming thin and parchment-like, 6.5 cm. long, 3 cm. broad at the base, inner narrow linear. *Pedicels* pale green, from about 3 cm. to 5 cm. long, suberect, straight; ovary bulge 1—2 cm. long. *Perianth* with the tube 3—5 cm. long, green, cernuous; segments white, dorsally suffused with rose, when faded turning light brown, conniving in a funnel shape with the apical third recurved, outer about 8 cm. long, 2.2 cm. broad about midway. *Stamens* with white filaments and black anthers. *Style* white with the apical upturned portion deep rose coloured; stigma terminal. *Capsule* oblong-obovate, about 5 cm. long and 4 cm. diam. in upper half, on long pedicels (up to 7 mm.), beak more or less 2.5 cm. long.

Occurs on loam or clay among karoo bushes or in open dry grassveld with scattered *Acacia karroo*. Recorded from the eastern Cape, from Albany district eastwards to Kentani and northwards to Queenstown district.

CAPE. Albany: Carlisle Bridge, near Grahamstown, *Archibald* 7513 (PRE. holotype); Dikkop Flats *Archibald* 7566. Bathurst: *Archibald* 5346, cult. King William's Town: near Berlin, *Comins* 1440; 1439. Cathcart: *McNeil* s.n. Queens-town: *Galpin* 2210. Komga: *Codd* 6349; *Flanagan* 624. Butterworth: *Pegler* 1802; *Dyer* 4509.

Early in the nineteenth century Ker-Gawler (according to Herbert, as will be pointed out below), confused this subspecies with *Crinum variabile*, a short-tubed species from Namaqualand. Herbert in turn, confused it with what he called "the common glaucous-leaved *C. capense*", and from his notes this included what is now known as *Crinum bulbispermum*, which although a glaucous-leaved species, is readily distinguished from our plant. In the National Herbarium, this plant has been confused both with typical *C. macowanii* and, when flowering material only was available, with *C. variabile* (Jacq.) Herb.; "confusum" was therefore the obvious choice for the epithet. The rank of subspecies was determined by the definite, restricted area of distribution and by the great variability of *C. macowanii*, the species to which it obviously belongs. Typical *Crinum macowanii* (see Journ. of S.A. Bot. 22 : 79, 1956) occurs in certain localities throughout the eastern Cape and northwards through Natal,



PLATE 1.

Crinum macowanii subsp. *confusum* Verdoorn. Originally from King William's Town district, Comins 1548. Cultivated at Pretoria. Leaves narrow, spreading; pedicels long, perianth-tube short. Photo: J. Reyburn.



PLATE 2.

Crinum macowanii subsp. *confusum* Verdoorn. Originally from Carlisle Bridge, Archibald 7566. Cultivated at Pretoria. Close-up showing the long pedicel, the ovary swelling and the short perianth-tube. Photo: J. Reyburn.

the Orange Free State and Transvaal into the tropics. To date it has not been possible to circumscribe any of the many forms that are found and to give them infraspecific rank because the variation in the colour of the leaves and the size of the plant does not seem to be correlated with any other tangible difference. It is probable though that as the species becomes better known infraspecific units may be recognised, but they will no doubt be of lower rank than the form here described, because this form has, besides the definite area of distribution, what seems to be an inherent difference, a short perianth-tube, shorter than the lobes instead of one as long as or longer than the lobes. Moreover this feature is combined with leaves which are rather narrow, glaucous, flaccid and often markedly undulate and prostrate (Plate 1). But this leaf character alone does not distinguish it from the typical subspecies for some of its forms have very similar leaves.



PLATE 3.

Crinum macowanii subsp. *confusum* Verdoorn. Originally from Carlisle Bridge, Archibald 7566. Cultivated at Pretoria. Photo: J. Reyburn.

The following is a brief history of the taxon as found in botanical publications. In 1809 Ker-Gawler published a figure of a short-tubed *Crinum*, matching the one here described, in the Botanical Magazine, Plate 1178, under the name *Amaryllis revoluta* (which, by the way, is a synonym of *C. lineare* L.). In 1822 he published a figure of a similar looking *Crinum*, Botanical Register plate 615, which he implied was the same species, and on this occasion described it as a variety of *Amaryllis revoluta*. Herbert in his "Amaryllidaceae" page 268, 1837, points out that, as he knows them, the specimen figured in the Botanical Magazine is not the same as the one figured later in the Botanical Register. The latter he determines as *Crinum variabile* (Jacq.) Herb. The former he claims differs in the flaccid glaucous leaves, instead of rather

thick green leaves, and flowers which do not turn red as they fade. Herbert's views can now be confirmed. *C. variabile* is depicted on plate 1433 of Flowering Plants of Africa, Vol. 36. From that figure and description it will be seen that it differs from *C. macowanii* subsp. *confusum* here described, mainly in the very features mentioned by Herbert. There can be no doubt that these two short-tubed species are specifically distinct. As pointed out in Flowering Plants of Africa, *C. variabile* occurs in the winter rainfall area while *C. macowanii* subsp. *confusum* is found in dry grassland or among karoo bushes in the eastern Cape.

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